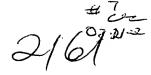


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THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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Commissioner of Patents Washington, D.C. 20231

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT (37 C.F.R. §1.97(b) (3))

Sir:

This information disclosure statement is being filed before the mailing of a first Office Action on the merits.

The above-identified patent application has a counter part foreign patent application PCT patent application No. PCT/US01/40504. A reference, listed below, is being disclosed to the Patent and Trademark Office as information that may be material to the examination of the above-identified patent application.

U.S. Patent No. 5,826,247 to Pintsov et al.

A copy of this reference is enclosed together with a Form PTO-1449 for the Examiner's use.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Clorite

Reg. No. 44,620

PERMAN & GREEN, LLP 425 Post Road Fairfield, CT 06430 (203) 259-1800 Customer No. 2512 1/4/02 Date

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